

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
REVIEW ORDINANCE

DESIGN GUIDELINES

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PREPARED FOR THE MEREDITH PLANNING BOARD BY
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PURPOSE STATEMENT

Architectural Design Review Design Guidelines provides architectural guidance intended to support and work in concert with the Architectural Design Review Ordinance enacted by the Town of Meredith in March 2001.

The purpose of the ordinance is ...

- to encourage architecturally significant buildings and features;
- to provide guidelines for property owners and design professionals to design new buildings that reflect and draw their inspiration from the architectural characteristics that are indigenous to Meredith, New Hampshire.
- to ensure compatibility with those characteristics without discouraging creativity and diversity; and
- to protect and enhance the visual qualities of Meredith's scenic and cultural byways.

The purpose of these *Design Guidelines* is ...

- to emphasize the importance of considering all aspects of architecture and design as outlined in the *Architectural Design Review Ordinance*, Section 6.B.2.a – k: “Building Criteria” including orientation, scale and proportion, rooflines, massing, features and details, materials, texture color, facades, signage, renovations and additions, gateways and scenic resources, and design continuity.
- to provide residents, developers, builders, and design professionals with visual images of architectural styles and building types that are consistent and inconsistent with the Performance Criteria;
- to use local examples to further illustrate (and annotate) the meaning and intent of the Performance Criteria; and
- to provide guidance to applicants, design professionals, design review administrators, and the Meredith Planning Board.

- a. **Building Orientation:** How a building is positioned or located on a site can complement or detract from the site and/or the architectural character of the surrounding area. The orientation of proposed buildings should take into consideration building setbacks, spacing between buildings and alignment of building(s) as evidenced in the development pattern of the surrounding area.



The buildings in these photographs are aligned with each other, and with existing pedestrian pathways and sidewalks.



Maintaining a consistent street edge in relationship to adjacent structures is encouraged. The building in the center of this photograph is set further back from the street than are its neighbors.

- b. Building Scale and Proportion:** Building elevations, scale, massing and the proportional relationship between structures can complement or detract from the architectural character of the surrounding area. The scale and proportion of proposed buildings should take into consideration the scale and proportion of buildings as evidenced in the development pattern of the surrounding area. Visual conflicts between properties should be minimized.



This building design relates to pedestrian orientation, an important consideration in settings such as downtown areas, commercial centers, or themed developments. It complements the architectural character of its neighboring inns.



This strip mall does not maintain a traditional scale and is not pedestrian-friendly. It creates a visual conflict with more traditional adjacent structures.

- c. **Rooflines:** Rooflines can provide visual interest and help to reduce the mass of a building. Traditional roofline types such as gabled, hipped, and gambrel that are evidenced in Meredith's architectural heritage are strongly encouraged. Type, shape, pitch and direction of roofs should be considered in the design. Flat roofs are discouraged.



These roof features add visual interest and are reflective of Meredith's architectural heritage. Rooflines such as these complement the character of adjoining neighborhoods.



Variations in these rooflines would have provided visual interest for these buildings. Dormers, chimneys, and/or changes in ridgelines should be used to avoid unbroken expanses of roofs. Roofline variations can also reduce the scale of larger buildings.

- d. **Massing:** The physical bulk or mass of buildings, particularly larger or elongated ones, can either enhance or detract from the architectural character of the community. Structures should be carefully designed to break up their mass into smaller visual components providing human scale, variation, and depth.



Pitched roofs (above) and changes in building elevation (below, right) may be used to give the appearance of multiple attached buildings. 'U'-shaped and 'L'-shaped structures (such as below, left) are encouraged.



d. Massing, continued:



Monotony of design, warehouse-style structures, and long, strip mall-type development should be avoided.

- e. **Architectural Features and Details:** Architectural features and details such as cornices, columns, corner trim, doorways, entrances, windows/trim, awnings, dormers, porches, etc., can provide or enhance visual interest, provide a pedestrian scale and help mitigate negative effects of building mass. Architectural features and details should be considered in every building design. Traditional features and details associated with Meredith's architectural heritage are strongly encouraged.



Use of multiple-paned windows or windows having the appearance of multiple windowpanes is encouraged.



Drive-through elements should be incorporated into the building. The drive-through window for the bank (left) is located behind the building, not visible from the main roadway. The drive-through window for the doughnut shop (right) is a simple window incorporated into the structure like the building's other windows.

e. Architectural Features and Details, continued:



The porch and lights on the restaurant at left are details that enhance visual interest. The porches and windows on the inn at right reduce to a human scale a building that could have looked massive and bulky.



Architectural features and details such as awnings (as seen on the restaurant at left), screens for HVAC units (as seen on the inn at right), columns, towers, turrets, skylights, and arches are encouraged so as to create visual interest.

e. Architectural Features and Details, continued:



No mechanical equipment on or in the building, including electrical, plumbing, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment, should be exposed to view. Such elements, such as those on the side of the grocery store at left, on the roof of the restaurant at center, and beside the building at right, should be appropriately screened by incorporation into the building design.



Franchise-style architecture, such as the fast-food restaurant at left, lacks reference to Meredith's traditional architectural forms and can contribute to the loss of community identity.



Exterior wall surfaces facing a public roadway or parking area, or that are otherwise publicly visible, should include windows for illumination, display or other purposes associated with the use. The buildings above, with large expanses of wall unbroken by windows, project a massive scale that diminishes visual interest.

- f. **Materials, Texture, and Color:** Exterior building materials, texture and colors should be treated as significant design elements that help define the appearance of a structure and create visual interest. The use of traditional materials that are consistent with Meredith's vernacular or indigenous architecture, or materials having the same visual effect, are strongly encouraged. Materials, textures, and colors used in the neighborhood should be considered. Arbitrary changes in materials or piecemeal embellishments that are not in keeping with the rest of the building are discouraged.



The use of traditional building materials such as granite, brick, fieldstone, wooden clapboard, wooden shingles, etc. should be considered in the design. Alternatively, contemporary materials that simulate traditional materials, and that have the same visual effect, are acceptable. The materials depicted here in the shopping center (above, left) and the restaurant (above, right) are consistent with Meredith's vernacular architecture.

The use of colors traditionally associated with the building style is encouraged. The colors of the inn at left create visual interest and help to define details in the architecture.



Exposed cinder block, corrugated steel, sheet plastic, sheet metal, or sheet fiberglass is discouraged. Lackluster colors detract from a building's visual appeal.

- g. Building Façade:** Façades for new or renovated structures should provide visual interest from all visually accessible sides. Windows, doorways, and architectural detailing and patterns should complement the building form and historical context. Façades should be designed to establish a complementary relationship with other site considerations such as pedestrian scale and orientation, signage, landscaping, and lighting.



Porches, awnings, and storefront treatments should reflect pedestrian scale. Fixed or retractable awnings at street level provide protection for pedestrians (above left). Awnings should be designed as an integral part of the building façade (above right). Metal awnings are discouraged.



Façade divisions, such as those in the shopping center at left, should be used to avoid unbroken expanses of walls.

This establishes a relationship with pedestrian scale. Building jogs, pilasters, architectural detailing, and changes in surface materials, colors, textures, and rooflines should all be considered for visual interest.



Windows should be complementary to the building's form, scale, and historical context. Smaller, less contemporary windows would have been more appropriate to the building above.



All sides of a structure shall receive design consideration. The front, sides, and rear of buildings shall be attractively designed and articulated to eliminate large spans of blank exterior wall such as that on the building above.

- h. Building Renovations or Additions:** Where an existing building has features that are consistent with the Performance Criteria, proposed renovations or additions should be designed to respect the proportions, patterns, detailing, materials, etc., of the original building. Where the existing building does not have features that are consistent with the Performance Criteria, the owner/applicant is encouraged to upgrade the structure to meet the Performance Criteria.



Where an existing building has substantial features that are consistent with the Performance Criteria, features used for proposed additions or renovations should complement or match the original structure. Renovations to the historical society at left resulted in a building (center) that was upgraded to reflect the Performance Criteria. Renovations to the former mill at right, now an inn and shopping center, retained the architectural character of the original building.



Additions that markedly contrast with the style of the original structure are discouraged. At left, the addition to this nursing home is designed in sharp contrast to the original brick structure.



In some instances, the best course of action is to design the addition to match the original structure, regardless of the criteria, as demonstrated by this second-story addition to the bank at left.

- i. **Signs:** Signs should be designed to meet the needs of individual uses while complementing the building, the site, and its surroundings. The design of building-mounted signs should complement, not detract from the architectural features of the building. Signs should be scaled to the architectural elements that surround it. Consideration should be given to sign form, color, lighting, and materials that are compatible with the building and its surroundings.



The location, size, material, and lighting of signage should be harmonized with the building design. The sign for Olde Province Common (above, left) is designed in a style that is complementary to the style of the shopping center. The signage for the bank (above, right) and for the gift and barber shops (left) are sized appropriately for their respective buildings.

Building-mounted signs should be proportionally scaled to the structure. The signs below appear disproportionate to the small scale of the buildings.



- j. **Gateways/Scenic Resources:** Some places in Meredith contribute to the landscape character of the community because of their location and scenic qualities. Many such properties and approaches act as gateways, providing first impressions and reinforcing Meredith's sense of place. Consideration should be given towards complementing these resources through the careful siting of new buildings, and the application of the Performance Criteria.

Applicants are referred to: *Town of Meredith Visual Resource Inventory and Assessment*, Kokx, 1999 for additional information.



This view is representative of the agricultural character of Meredith's landscapes. Successful development will strive to maintain the integrity of the setting and elements within the view, including the open field, fences, rock walls, and farm structures found on the site.



Maintaining and/or enhancing key views within the community is important. Development should not detract from the sense of order or harmony of the landscape patterns formed by the forest, agricultural fields, open meadows, or other features found in the viewed landscape.

In this or similar views, it is important to maintain the opportunity to view the scene as well as the integrity of the view through good design principles and placement of structures.

j. Gateways/Scenic Resources, continued:



The view across the open field provides a panoramic scene highlighting the community's important cultural and historic character. Architectural elements introduced in the foreground should maintain the view and repeat the New England architectural theme viewed at this location.



Commercial developments can impact the integrity of scenic views related to important gateway routes. Redevelopment of existing sites provides the opportunity to enhance or restore views through vegetation plantings, sign management, and use of architectural elements in keeping with the community's character.



In highly focal views, especially those with no or little development within the scene, the view can be kept free of distracting elements by keeping development further back from the highway or viewing corridor.

j. Gateways/Scenic Resources, continued:



The natural appearing landscape with the dynamic landforms and vegetation patterns viewed across the open field are important elements to maintain. Successful development will maintain the views and fit structures to the contours of the hillside, minimizing clearing and potential contrasting cut-and-fill work in order to retain the character of the view.

- k. **Design Continuity:** Each building design, from the simple to the complex, requires the coordination of multiple design elements such as architectural style, form, massing, materials, detailing, etc. The proposed building design shall demonstrate the coordination of design elements and an overall design continuity.



The designs of these structures reflect Meredith's architectural heritage. The inn (bottom, left) is a restoration that remained true to the home's historic character. The other buildings are new structures that were designed in a traditional style to provide continuity with the surrounding community.

k. Design Continuity, continued:



Designs that fail to capture Meredith's sense of architectural tradition and heritage are discouraged.